

DNREC to hold public hearing Wednesday, June 8 in Millville on Statewide Activity Approval process for Delaware shellfish aquaculture activities

DOVER – The DNREC Division of Water's Wetlands and Subaqueous Lands Section will conduct a public hearing Wednesday, June 8 to solicit input on the proposed Statewide Activity Approval (SAA) for shellfish aquaculture in specific, designated shellfish aquaculture development areas (SADA) in Delaware. The hearing will start at 6 p.m. at the Millville Fire Hall, 35554 Atlantic Ave, Millville, DE 19970.

The SAA, if adopted by DNREC, would be used by the Division of Water to more efficiently issue approvals for the use of subaqueous lands after shellfish aquaculture lease applicants have received authorization from the Division of Fish & Wildlife for shellfish aquaculture activities within specific portions of the SADAs previously established under 7 DE Admin Code 3800 Shellfish Aquaculture Regulation. The public is advised that the upcoming hearing will address only the use of the SAAs by the Division of Water to more efficiently review applications and issue permits – the state's shellfish aquaculture regulation is not the subject of this hearing.

The SADAs eligible for approval by the Statewide Activity Approval, with their parenthetical designations, include Indian River Bay (IR-A), Rehoboth Bay (RB-A, RB-B, RB-C), and Little Assawoman Bay (LA-B in part and LA-D), specifically.

DNREC had previously published public notice of the proposed

Statewide Activity Approval, accepting public comments on the SAA process during the March 23 – April 12, 2016 comment period. Subsequently, the Department determined that the public interest warranted holding the upcoming public hearing on the SAA, according to Wetlands & Subaqueous Lands Administrator Steven Smailer.

Anyone wishing to comment on the proposed SAA may present written statements through the close of the public comment period, which has been reopened and extended until the conclusion of the June 8 public hearing. Interested parties may also present comment orally or in written form at the hearing. Persons who want to speak at the public hearing are encouraged to register through DNREC's hearing officer Robert Haynes in advance and no later than June 6. This registration will be used to determine the order of speakers at the public hearing.

Registration and any written comments should be sent either by emailing Robert.Haynes@delaware.gov or by mail to:

Robert P. Haynes, Esq.
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